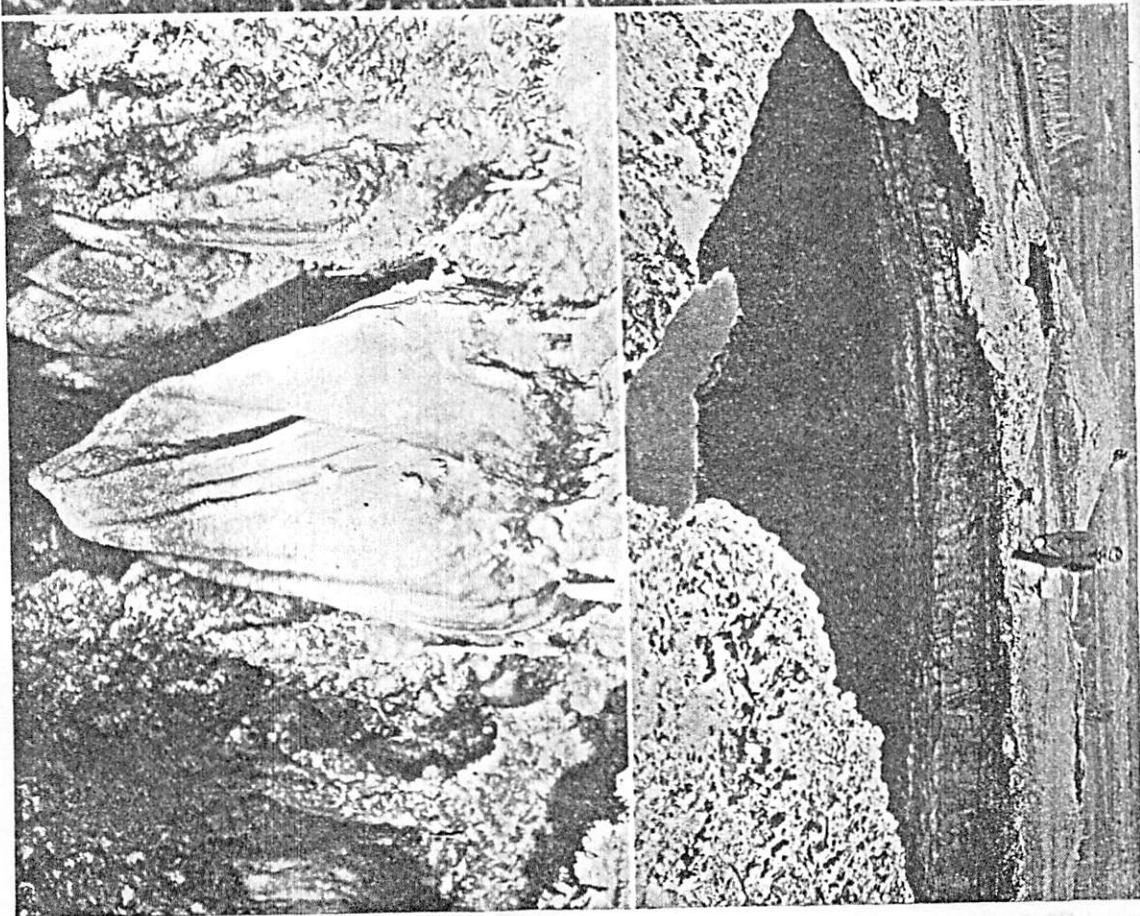


AMERICAN FORK CANYON, THE UTAH HOT POTS, THE HEART OF TIM-  
PANOGOS (CAVE)





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PAMPHLET FILE

*History of Timpanogos Cave*

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has been implied that this last found cave is the one presently known as Timpanogos.

Present day visitors to the area see only the first room of the Hansen's Cave. It was from this room that a tunnel was drilled to Middle Cave. Overall, it is a linear northeast trending series of three large rooms connected by smaller rooms or passageways with a few short side passages. Total length is about 300 feet. The first room entered is used as an orientation chamber for the cave tours and no visitor is allowed into the other sections as a protective measure for the cave's water supply which is located there.

#### TIMPANOGOS CAVE

American Fork Canyon has always been a favorite recreational area for residents of the nearby towns in Utah Valley; this being especially true during the heat of summer when its shaded cool fastness offers welcome relief from the sun-baked valley. Hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking and hiking are some of the activities which may be enjoyed there. One day during the early years of World War I, a group of people from Lehi, Utah, planned an outing in the canyon and while there decided to visit the old Hansen Cave. Two of the group, James W. Gough and Frank Johnson, youngsters of about 14, did not enter the cave with the others, instead they remained outside to "climb around and explore". In the course of their wanderings the boys found an entrance to a previously unknown cave, presently known as Timpanogos. A personal account of his discovery is given by James W. Gough in appendix A of this paper.<sup>7</sup>

Soon after the initial discovery a number of Church and social organizations from Lehi visited the subterranean wonder. However, despite the fact that numerous people had been to the cave, for some undetermined reason public knowledge of it seemed to fade away. That is from all but the memory of the discoverer for on August 8, 1915, James C. Gough, father of James W., recorded at the Utah County Court house in Provo, a filing on the location of the "Lone Star" lode. This claim covered the land on which the cave was found and the locators were listed as James C. Gough, James W. Gough and John Hutchings. According to the younger Gough and Hutchings, the filing was made about one year after the initial entry. Shortly after the filing the Goughs moved to Idaho, and little or none of the necessary assessment work to validate the claim was done. In order to conceal the entrance, before they left, young Gough piled rocks over the opening, and apparently no one entered the cave again until 1921.



In 1920, on the 18th and 25th of May, three mining claims were filed with the County Recorder in Provo, on locations in American Fork Canyon. These claims, "Bet Your Boots", "Golden Arrow", and the "Joy Mine" were located by E. T. Culmer, S. F. Snyder, Don Workman and David Andrews. They were filed as being  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile above the upper power plant in the American Fork Canyon and described as "joined to each other". These three claims, for metalliferous ore deposits, led eventually to litigation with the Forest Service, the agency administering the lands.

Rumors to the effect that a "new cave" had been found in American Fork Canyon were circulating in the nearby towns early in 1921. On June 30th of that year, Edwin S. Poulson, a resident of American Fork, wrote a letter to the Wasatch Forest Supervisor, Dana Parkinson. In the letter the rumors were brought to the attention of the Forest Supervisor, and the cave was described in superlative terms by Mr. Poulson, though he had not seen it. The writer expressed concern that negotiations were underway for the sale of "specimens" to the Chicago University and that such action would destroy the scenic beauty of the cave. Mr. Poulson could give no more than an approximate location of the cave, but he did identify the original discoverers as James "Golf", Jr. (Gough) and John Hutchings, both of Lehi. In exchange for this information certain photographic privileges were expected. On, or about, August 27, 1921, Dana Parkinson and Mr. Poulson visited the elder Mr. Gough to see if he would take them to the cave, but correspondence of Mr. Parkinson's reveals that, "he (Mr. Gough) refused to disclose any thing regarding the cave."<sup>6</sup>

Reports of the rumors had been carried in the local newspapers that summer and came to the attention of some members of an outdoor club in Payson, Utah. With the intention of visiting the caves the club members arranged to make a trip to American Fork Canyon on August 14, 1921. That same day Vearl J. Manwill, a member of the club, succeeded in finding the sealed-over entrance to this much sought after cave. (Mr. Manwill's personal account of the discovery may be read in appendix B).<sup>8</sup> Sitting around a campfire that evening after exploring the cave the club members discussed possible courses of action. Presumably, without the participants being aware, a scene was re-enacted along the banks of the American Fork River which was, in essence, a duplication of one which occurred around an immortal campfire some fifty years earlier at the confluence of the Firehole and Gibbon rivers in Wyoming. There, on September 19, 1870, Cornelius Hedges, a member of the Washburn-Doane-Langford expedition that was exploring the Yellowstone region, countered pro-

posals that the natural wonders to sub-divided for personal exploitation. Instead, he offered the suggestion that the whole region be set aside as a national park.

The Payson group having witnessed that day the result of depredation in Hansen's Cave, were open to suggestions. The leader of the group, Dr. L.D. Pfouts, advanced the idea that they form a club which would be dedicated to the purpose of protecting and preserving the cave from vandalism. By the fire the Payson Alpine Club was created, and it was agreed that they would return two weeks later to fully explore the cave.

As most of the American Fork Canyon was within the Wasatch National Forest, officers of the administering agency were particularly interested in determining the validity of the cave rumors. During the summer of 1921, occasional searches were conducted in the canyon, but to no avail. Therefore, on August 28, 1921, when Forest Deputy Supervisor Walter G. Mann and Ranger Vivian N. West observed a number of automobiles parked by the riverside below the old Hansen Cave they decided to investigate. The tracks left by people in a large party went up the south wall of the canyon. Following the footsteps of the group, Mann and West found that they ascended the trail built by Hansen for a way then turned off and headed east. Eventually the Forest Service officers came upon a group of about 22 people, setting and resting by an opening that led into the cliff face. Included in the party were the members of the Payson Alpine Club. There was apparently some misunderstanding between the officials and the other group when they met, but this was clarified later when the facts became known.<sup>8</sup> In order to protect the cave, the Supervisor and Ranger posted the area as a "Public Service Site." The next day Fire Guard, Amber Boulter was stationed at the foot of the trail to prevent trespass. A short time later, for added protection, the Forest Service placed a door over the entranceway. This action was the first step in the series that eventually led to the reservation of this tract as a national monument. When the reservation was made as a "public service site" the authorities recognized the fact that a mining claim had been staked on the same ground. The claim was the Lone Star Lode which had been located by the Gough's and Hutchings. Assistant Acting District Forester R. E. Guy in a memorandum dated September 3, 1921, stated that since "The locator has done no work on the claim and as it has been posted with the public service site signs, no present attention will be paid thereto by the Service." The locators of this claim apparently made little or no effort to dispute this decision.

Announcement of the discovery by the Forest Service engendered considerable excitement in the nearby communities where civic organizations pointed out its potential as a tourist attraction. Although appreciating the newly found cave as a rare natural phenomenon that should be protected and yet made available to the public, the Forest Service was not in a position to assume these responsibilities because of the lack of funds. However, there were many local organizations eager to accept the responsibility, one of the more prominent was the Commercial Club of American Fork. At a meeting of the club on September 8, 1921, Dana Parkinson told the assembly that an appropriation of \$250 had been made by the Forest Service to erect a suitable door at the entrance to the cave. In addition, the Service was planning to build a trail and would enlarge passageways inside the cave in order to make all rooms accessible. But, he suggested "the electric lighting and other improvements would have to be done by local people."9 Parkinson had expressed this same view, the day before, in a letter to Dr. L. D. Pfouts, the leader of the Payson outdoor club. Before the meeting Clifford E. Young moved that a "Committee be selected from American Fork, Lehi, Alpine, and Pleasant Grove to ascertain the cost of lighting the cave and if possible get the work started." Five weeks later, on October 20, when the club met again, S. L. Chipman moved that the organization pledge itself to collect \$1,200 for lighting purposes. The pledge was conditional, based upon approval by the Forest Service of the sale of tickets for cave tours at \$1.00 each. In response to the request seeking permission to enact the plan the supervisor of the Wasatch National Forest, in a letter dated October 21, 1924, replied as follows:

"The Forest Service cannot afford to keep a guard there continuously. If you sold 1200 tickets it would keep one man pretty busy guiding them through the cave.

If the Club cares to hire a man of its own to protect the cave, we can issue a special use (permit) for it, so that you can charge whatever admission is deemed proper.

The Commercial Club might arrange for excursions on special days so that Ranger West could take them through the cave. In other words, we will be willing to contribute time occasionally in guiding parties through the cave, but cannot afford to do it as a regular practice.

I would like to meet with whatever committee is to handle the situation and see if we cannot make some definite arrangement for the administration of the cave."10

This letter apparently cleared the way for an organization, separate from any federal agency, to administer and operate the cave as a tourist attraction. Such a method of franchise operation by the Forest Service was not unusual at the time. The Utah Outdoor Association had been chartered by the Service to operate recreational facilities under a similar arrangement in the Wasatch Mountains near Salt Lake City.

In the meantime, cooperative action of groups and individuals in the four towns had secured the money necessary for the lighting project and plans were being drawn for the actual work. The Commercial Club pledge was fulfilled by obtaining individual donations and subscriptions, sale of season tickets for trips through the cave both before and after development, and a loan which was co-signed by some of the more affluent members of the club. In addition other groups, such as the Wasatch Club of Salt Lake City, made generous contributions and a sum of almost \$3,500 was collected for improvement of the area. Spearheaded by the Commercial Club of American Fork, the nearest town to the cave, but actively supported by the other communities, this initiative seemingly motivated the Forest Service to make the offer outlined in the letter of October 24.<sup>11</sup> To Handle the details involved, a Timpanogos Outdoor Committee was organized. This group, incidently, used a number of different names before finally settling on the name Timpanogos Cave Committee. Among the members were S. L. Chipman, E. W. Paxman, A. P. Warnick, J. L. Firmage, and P. M. Nielsen. Soon after the committee was formed the members met with the Wasatch Club of Pleasant Grove, and Dana Parkinson to discuss ways and means of developing and operating the cave. Since certain expenses were anticipated it was deemed necessary to collect a fee. But, before an admission charge could be levied on property belonging to the United States Government, a 'charter' had to be obtained from the controlling agency, in this case the Department of Agriculture. Parkinson explained to the assembly the intricacies of procedure and the amount of time usually involved in obtaining a charter for such a purpose.

During the course of the meeting it was brought to the attention of the group that the Utah Outdoor Association of Salt Lake City had a charter, and that an affiliation of the two organizations would obviate the necessity of obtaining a second charter. Thus, on November 7, 1921, a letter was



written by P. M. Nielsen, Secretary of the Timpanogos Outdoor Committee, to J. E. Light Secretary of the Utah Outdoor Association exploring the possibility of an affiliation. The request was readily accepted, but with a stipulation, also made by the Forest Service, that "money taken in as entrance fees to the cave be put back into beautifying the canyon and the cave."<sup>12</sup> No other restrictions were imposed by the Salt Lake City organization and complete control remained in the hands of the local people; subordinate, of course, to the Forest Service. By this arrangement considerable benefit accrued to the newcomer, from advice tempered by experience to the extensive advertising and publicity activity of the older group as well as financial donations.

Misunderstanding with respect to the nature of the association was to breed considerable ill will, brought about, in part, by one man who being denied certain commercial privileges, misrepresented the terms of the affiliation with the Utah Outdoor Association before influential groups and individuals at Provo. These Provo people, interested in promoting scenic Mt. Timpanogos, were led to believe that control of the new tourist attraction was being pirated by organizations in Salt Lake County. Since Provo was the county seat and groups there had actively promoted the area, they felt that the control should be placed in their hands, or, at least retained within the county. Before the matter was eventually cleared, some rather bitter correspondence was exchanged and recriminatory articles appeared in the local newspapers.

Soon after the discovery the Forest Service consulted with various individuals and organizations interested in the cave in quest for a suitable name. Among those suggested were: The Cave of Crystal Cliffs, The Wonder Cave, The Fairy Cave and the Cave of Elves. None of the above were considered appropriate and the decision of the Service was to make the official name Timpanogos Cave. This was chosen because it is distinctive and did not tend to duplicate that of any other area, and it was felt that it would simultaneously help to advertize and be publicized by Mt. Timpanogos.

Naming of the various formations and sections of the cave came more by chance than by intent. Some of the organizations interested in the development of the cave had arranged for special tours of the area during September and October, 1921. These trips were two-fold in purpose for they generally consisted of prominent individuals who, it was hoped, would give favorable publicity to the cave, and secondly donations; contributions being accepted for improvements. An offshoot of some of these tours was the naming of

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